EXCISE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR E b-2
REVIEWED BY ESchmelzer DATE 4/10/87
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NEA/ARP
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JULY 28 1980

Dear Mr. Dodd:

In response to your letter of June 30 which you and forty-three other Congressmen sent to President Carter concerning the Saudi Arabian request for F-15 accessory equipment, I am enclosing a copy of a letter from Secretary Muskie to Senator Byrd explaining the Administration's position on this subject.

Sincerely,

J. Brian Atwood
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

Enclosure:

Secretary Muskie's letter
to Senator Byrd.

cc: All Signatories.

The Honorable
Christopher J. Dodd,
House of Representatives.

Drafted: NEA/ARP:MRArietti:slr
7/25/80:x23121
Cleared: NEA:WImbrie
H:APBurleigh

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

July 22, 1980

Dear Mr. Majority Leader:

I am replying to your letter of June 23 to President Carter concerning supplemental equipment for Saudi Arabian F-15 aircraft.

I can assure you that the Administration has not departed from the assurances given to the Congress by Secretary Brown in 1978 and that your views and those of the Congress would be taken fully into account in reviewing Saudi Arabian requests for such equipment.

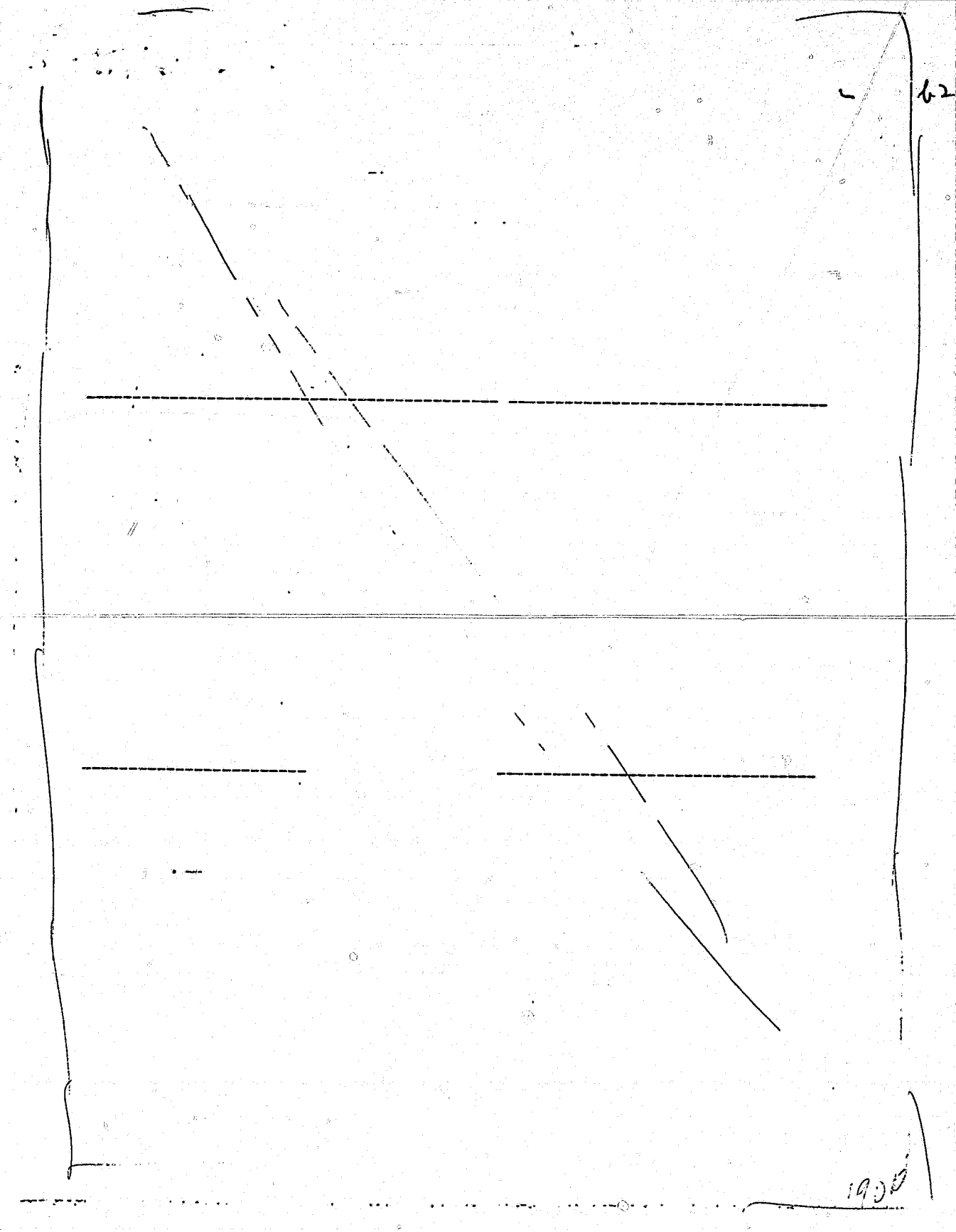
This is not a matter pending decision within the government and no decision on this issue would be made without full prior consultations with the Congress.

I hope this clarifies the situation so that there will be no misapprehensions as to the position of this Administration.

Sincerely,

Edmund S. Muskie

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd,
Majority Leader,
United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.



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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

June 30, 1980

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The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

We are deeply concerned over reports that your Administration is seriously considering a request by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to buy additional equipment for the sixty F-15 fighters already on order from the United States.

The equipment Saudi Arabia is seeking, (conformal fuel tanks, multiple ejection racks for increased ordnance, and AIM-9L air-to-air missiles), will significantly increase the combat radius, lethality, and the ground attack capability of the Saudi F-15's. In addition, the KC-135 tankers and the airborne warning and control aircraft the Saudis are also reportedly seeking would further enhance the combat effectiveness of the sixty F-15's.

When the Congress debated the wisdom of providing the F-15 air-superiority fighter to Saudi Arabia two years ago, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown assured the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that, "Saudi Arabia has not requested nor do we intend to sell any other systems or armaments that would increase the range or enhance the ground attack capability of the F-15." Providing the equipment the Saudis are reportedly now requesting would, in our opinion, constitute a violation of tne Administration's assurances to Congress.

Two years ago, your Administration argued that Saudi Arabia needed this nation's most formidable air-superiority fighter in order to defend itself against potential attack in this volatile region of the world. It was made clear that the Saudis intended to use the F-15 in its primary mission as an air-superiority fighter and in a defensive role. The addition of the equipment being requested would significantly increase the aircraft's offensive ground attack capability, and would therefore greatly increase the potential threat to Israel.

We would therefore respectfully request that you not submit any request to Congress for the sale of this additional equipment to Saudi Arabia.

Sincerely,

JONATHAN B. BINGHAM

EDWARD J. DERWINSKI

CHRISTOPHER J. DODD

LESTER L. WOLFF

ELIZABETH HOLTZMAN

BENJAMIN S. ROSENTHAL

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